

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A communication link protocol for communicating between nodes of an interconnect system via communication links, the communication link protocol comprising:

a direct memory access (DMA) write command for performing an inter-node DMA transfer of a block of data directly from a local node to a remote node via one of the communication links;

an administrative write command for writing data from a local node to registers in a remote node via one of the communication links for administrative purposes;

a memory copy write command for mirroring a write to a local node to a remote nodes by writing an entire line of memory from the local node to a line of memory at the remote node via one of the communication links when a new data is written into the line of memory at the local node even when the new data is smaller than the line of memory at the local node; and

a built in self test (BIST) command for testing the functionality of one of the communication links.

Claim 2 (original): The communication link protocol of Claim 1 wherein each command is conveyed between a local node and a remote node in the form of a respective command packet.

Claim 3 (original): The communication link protocol of Claim 2 wherein each respective command packet carries information for at least one command flag.

Claim 4 to 9 (canceled).

Claim 10 (currently amended): The communication link protocol of Claim 1, wherein said performing an inter-node DMA transfer of a block of data directly from a local node to a remote node comprises copying the block of data from a local memory of the local node to a remote memory of the remote node.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The communication link protocol of Claim 1, wherein said performing an inter-node DMA transfer of a block of data directly from a local node to a remote node comprises computing parity over multiple blocks of data from a local memory of the local node and writing the parity to a remote memory of the remote node in a single operation.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The communication link protocol of Claim 1, wherein ~~said mirroring a write to said writing an entire line of memory from a local node to a remote node~~ comprises:

reading existing data from the line of memory in a local memory of the local node;

merging the new data with the existing data so the new data replaces at least some existing data while other existing data remains;

writing merged data to the line of memory in the local memory of the local node;

transferring the merged data via one of the communication links to the remote node; and

writing the merged data to a corresponding line of memory in a remote memory of the remote node.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The communication link protocol of Claim 12, wherein said writing ~~an entire line of memory from a local node to a remote node~~ the merged data to the corresponding line of memory in a remote memory of the remote node comprises ~~the writing the line of memory to a~~ the remote node using a same address offset of the line of memory at the local memory of the local node.